

REMARKS

Claims 1-4 and 6-17 and 28-42 are currently pending; claim 5 and 18-27 have been canceled without prejudice to filing a continuation application thereon. Claims 14-17 and 38-42 are withdrawn from consideration.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's grant of and participation in a March 15, 2007 telephone interview with Dr. Eric Henderson and the undersigned. During the interview, Dr. Henderson explained the purpose of the invention and how it differs from previous work in the field. Furthermore, there was a discussion with the Examiner of the cited art with regard to the pending claims. Finally, the Examiner indicated that a further search would be conducted and that if new art were cited, the next action would likely be made non-final.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-10, 12, 13, 28-33, 36, and 37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lal et al., "Multimodal Atomic Force Microscopy: Biological Imaging Using Atomic Force Microscopy Combined with Light Fluorescence and Confocal Microscopies and Electrophysiologic Recording", International Journal of Imaging Systems and Technology, Vol. 8, 293-300 (1997) ("Lal et al."), in view of Peeters (U.S. Patent No. 6,325,904) ("Peeters"). In addition, claims 11, 34, and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lal et al. in view of Peeters in further view of Yan et al., "A general microcantilever surface modification using a multilayer for biospecific recognition", Organic and Biomolecular Chemistry, available on-line (2002) ("Yan et al."). Finally, claim 37 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lal et al., in view of Peeters in further view of Tamayo et al., "Chemical sensors and biosensors in liquid environment based on microcantilevers with amplified quality factor", Ultramicroscopy (2001) 86:167-173 ("Tamayo et al.").

However, the combination of Lal et al. and Peeters fails to teach or suggest all of the elements of the claims. In particular, the combination of references does not teach a probe having a pointed member with a plurality of domains disposed thereon. The Lal et al. reference teaches nothing about a probe having an array of domains anywhere on the probe. Although Peeters discloses formation of so-called 'nanoelectrodes' on an AFM cantilever, there is nothing in Peeters that would teach or suggest an apparatus having an array of domains on a pointed member as claimed. Therefore, because the combination of Lal et al. and Peeters does not teach or suggest the recited limitations, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is patentable over the art and requests that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn. Furthermore, neither Yan

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et al. nor Tamayo et al., when combined with Lal et al. and Peeters, cures the deficiencies of the combination of Lal et al. and Peeters set forth above.

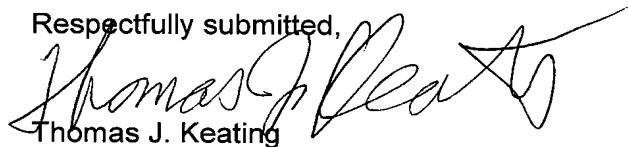
Since claims 1-4, 6-13, and 28-37 depend directly or indirectly from allowable claim 1, they are therefore allowable for at least the reasons set forth above. The dependent claims may also be allowable for additional reasons not discussed herein. Thus, withdrawal of the rejections and allowance of claims 1-4, 6-13, and 28-37 is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance and request withdrawal of the rejections and allowance of the claims. Applicants invite the Examiner to contact the undersigned should further clarification concerning this response be required.

No fee is believed due in connection with this response. However, if any additional fee is owed, please charge Deposit Account 50-0842 for such fee.

Respectfully submitted,


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